
Regional Council Activity Report

December 15, 2004



Executive Director's Report

Happy 2005! The new year always brings with it new energy and a renewed commitment to excel in the year ahead. With the passage of Proposition 400, we have a clear road map for the year ahead, as our focus now shifts to the implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The first five years of the program have an unprecedented level of spending. The freeway program for FY 2006-FY 2010 is expected to exceed \$2.6 billion, representing an approximate 50 percent increase over the five-year period. Among our major tasks for 2005 is to ensure that the Regional Transportation Plan is delivered according to the Plan presented to the voters, and to serve as stewards of the Plan in preparation for the five-year performance audit required by state law.

Among our tasks will be to develop the Annual Report that will now include freeways, transit and streets. We will need to implement the MAG Life Cycle Program for Arterial Streets, which was mandated by state law as a MAG responsibility.

The challenge we have is the very short time frame in which to approve the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan. The current TIP will expire on December 9, 2005. To meet this deadline, Regional Council action is scheduled for June/July 2005.

It is anticipated that the schedule of projects for all modes for inclusion in the TIP will be heard at the February Regional Council Meeting, and we will need to have approval of a Draft Plan for Air Quality Conformity Analysis by March. This represents a significant amount of work ahead for our technical and policy committees, especially the Transportation Policy Committee and Regional Council.

It is an exciting challenge to have. We are looking forward to a busy and productive year.

For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.



Action Items

Regional Council Meeting Report for December 15, 2004

Early Phase Public Input Opportunity

The Regional Council received a presentation regarding public input received during the FY 2005 MAG Early Phase Public Input Opportunity. The early phase is part of MAG's adopted four-phase public involvement process, and allows the opportunity for early input into plans and programs. Input opportunities included a TIP Guidance Report workshop combined with an early phase open house and stakeholders meeting. Other opportunities during the phase included a MAG at the Mall event and booths at the Arizona State Fair, Fiesta Glendale!, the Hispanic Women's Conference, and Gilbert's So Long to Summer Fest.

Comments included citizen support for a regional Dial-a-Ride system, completion of Loop 303, an improved bus system, and a coordinated transportation system. Concerns were voiced regarding the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of the light rail system, and concerns over the reconstruction of Grand Avenue. A document, the Early Phase Input Opportunity Report, was provided with more detailed information summarizing citizen comments. The Mid-Phase Input Opportunity will begin at the end of January.

For more information, please contact Jason Stephens, MAG Public Involvement Planner, (602) 254-6300.

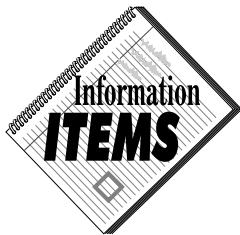
Transportation Policy Committee Recommendations

With the passage of Proposition 400, a new state law is in effect regarding the appointment of the business members on the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC). According to state law, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives are authorized to appoint six business members who represent regionwide business interests. The law also provides that the Chair of the Regional Planning Agency may submit names to the President and Speaker for consideration. The TPC voted to forward the names of the following individuals for consideration by the legislature:

- ❖ David Berry, Vice President, Swift Transportation (Freight Representative)
- ❖ Jed Billings, President and CEO, FNF Construction (Construction Representative)

- ❖ Eneas Kane, Vice President and General Counsel, DMB Associates, Inc. (Business Representative)
- ❖ Diane Scherer, Chief Executive Officer, Phoenix Association of Realtors; Chair, City of Phoenix Citizen's Transit Commission; Member, Board of Directors, Friends of Transit (Transit Representative)
- ❖ David C. Scholl, Senior Vice President, Westcor (Business Representative)
- ❖ Martin L. Shultz, Vice President Government Affairs, Pinnacle West Capital Corporation (Business Representative)

For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

Earned Income Tax Credit Program

The Regional Council received a presentation on the Earned Income Tax Credit Program (EITC). EITC is a refundable tax credit that could result in extra money for eligible taxpayers. The encouragement of residents to apply and receive EITC could increase the resources and dollars coming into local communities and businesses. According to the IRS, millions of dollars in tax credits have gone unclaimed, so in 2001, municipalities in Maricopa County began to coordinate efforts to encourage participation. Among the cities partnering in an effort to recover earned income taxes are Avondale, Chandler, El Mirage, Goodyear, Glendale, Mesa, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Surprise, and Tempe.

For more information, please contact Debbra Determan, MAG Human Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Employee Recognition

Each year, MAG recognizes the years of service for employees as certain milestones are reached. The following employees were recognized at the Regional Council meeting and awarded their years of service in order of their hire dates: 5 Years: Jason Stephens, Dean Giles, Anubhav Bagley, Brenda Day, Ratna Korepella, and Melissa Carrao; 10 Years: Paul Ward; 15 Years: Judy Tadlock; 20 Years: Mark Schlappi. The Regional Council acknowledged the staff members with applause.



Upcoming Events

MAG to Host Regional Forum

On January 25, MAG will host "On the Road to Greatness: Facts. Focus. Future," an interactive forum and dialogue to explore how our region compares to peer regions in the United States. During the forum, a Regional Report will be unveiled that compares our region to peer regions in seven issue areas: governance, growth, urban form, regional transportation, air quality, economic quality and social well-being. The forum will explore why people move to the Valley, and discuss potential building blocks for the future. Paul Ringer, Interim President and CEO of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, will focus on business development strategy, and Lattie Coor, Chairman and CEO for the Center for the Future of Arizona, will discuss current visioning efforts. Local government elected officials and business leaders are encouraged to attend. The event will be held January 25, 2005 from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m. (continental breakfast served at 7:30 a.m.) at the Arizona Club in the Bank One Center, 201 N. Central Avenue, 37th Floor, Phoenix. Cost is \$35 per person.

For more information or to RSVP, please call Constance Kish at the MAG offices, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council will be held on Wednesday, January 26, 2005 at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix. Agenda items will include discussion of the development of the FY 2006 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget, and discussion of a model resolution regarding sales tax incentives and revenue sharing. Additional agenda items are pending.

For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.